

**Folder 20:
Webster,
Jackson L.
(Sitka)
1930,
1937-1938**

Oct. 6, 1930

BARROW MISSION - ALASKA

Data by A.J. Montgomery

I. (a) In this mission we do not own any land. We have Occupancy Rights from the government.

1- At Barrow our replacement value of the buildings is \$85,000.

At Cape Prince of Wales the replacement value is \$20,000.

(a) This statement covers the work done at Barrow, Point Barrow, Wainwright and Cape Prince of Wales.

II- A- The mission at Barrow exerts an influence from Icy Cape to Barrow, 120 miles, and from Barrow to Demarcation Point (Canadian boundary), 400 miles. The mission also exerts an influence on all of the Eskimo living north and west of the Endicott range of mountains.

B- At Barrow there is a church with 328 members.

At Point Barrow, eleven miles north, there is a church with 55 members.

At Wainwright there are 115 members.

At Barrow there is an eight-bed hospital with daily clinic. It is the only hospital on the shores of the Arctic Ocean.

Sunday schools are in each of the three churches.

At Barrow there is a native Junior Endeavor Society.

There is a Mother's Club, which meets every Thursday. This club is one of the most efficient organizations in connection with the work. Instruction in sanitation, hygiene and public health subjects are systematically given.

At Point Barrow and Wainwright preaching services, Sunday schools and other religious activities are carried on. The doctor visits these stations regularly and looks after the health of the people.

At Cape Prince of Wales there is regular religious service and Sunday school. We have a practical nurse who gives instruction in public health matters besides taking care of the sick.

C-

1- The Eskimo in the Arctic Ocean have lived by hunting and fishing. The whale, seal and walrus have been their great sources of food supply. In the past they have earned considerable money by trapping fur animals. The government has splendid schools at Barrow, Wainwright and Cape Prince of Wales. Along the shores of the Arctic Ocean the religious conditions are good. Practically every resident adult is a member of one of the three churches, in the Barrow group. These same conditions apply more or less to Cape Prince of Wales.

2- Conditions are changing. The young educated Eskimo are beginning to drift into the cities of Alaska. Unless the movement can be checked, the exploitation of reindeer by a large corporation will within five years deprive the Eskimo of the never failing supply of food.

D- There is no overlapping in any of these stations. Mutual cooperation between government and missions. No other denomination at work.

III- A.

1- In view of changes taking place, would suggest that we ask the government to take over hospital work at Barrow, leaving our mission free to proceed with the program of religious development.

2- It is urgently necessary that we open up several nuclei for our work in the hinterland lying east of Barrow. For 400 miles there is no place where the evangelized natives can congregate for religious service.

B- No suggestion. Present program of cooperation is fine.

C-

1- In the next five years we should replace our present doctor at Barrow with a younger preacher-physician and begin to put more emphasis on missionary extension eastward.

2- Answered above.

IV- I would set up a program to erect at least three branch buildings east of Barrow, two of them at least to be on the shores of the Arctic Ocean and the third back toward the mountains. These chapels would be so constructed as to have a shelter house for storm-bound travelers and a house for a native helper to dwell in. These stations should be linked up to Barrow with a snowmobile such as Commander Byrd used recently and the Moravians are going to use this winter in their missions on the Ruskokwin. For Cape Prince of Wales I would take over both the hospital and the native Eskimo church of the Methodists at Nome which have been offered to us. This would make a compact basis for our work in the Seward Peninsula of which Cape Prince of Wales is the westernmost part. A snowmobile should be used to link up Wales and Nome during nine months when the snow lies on the ground.

October 20, 1930

Rev. Jackson L. Webster
Sitka, Alaska.

My dear Mr. Webster:

Your letter of October 11 came today, and I hasten to reply to it because it is the sort of a letter which I like to receive and like to answer. I am glad you ask as many questions as you do. It gives me real pleasure in attempting to answer them and I hope it may be as satisfactory to you as your letter has been to me. I am going to number the items so as to cover everything that you ask about.

1- Docket sheets are used as the official warrant for the Treasurer paying money to the parties included in them. They are made for all items of expense. The Treasurer can pay no bill, whatever, without having the authorization of a docket properly approved. The dockets are presented to the Board and when approved by them are the warrant for the Treasurer paying out the money they call for.

2- The fund for presbytery meeting is to assist in paying the expenses of the ministers to presbytery. It is not large enough to pay all of the expenses, but it assists. The Board makes this grant, so far as I know, only to the two presbyteries of Alaska. In the past this fund has been paid to Waggoner. Would you prefer to have it paid to you, as Chairman of the Committee, so that you might recheck it out to the men in whatever way seems wise to you and your committee, for we regard this fund as one which the committee should be responsible for?

3- The missionary travel fund is a consolidated account for the two presbyteries. Out of it we pay the travel expenses of missionaries into and out of Alaska.

4- It is pretty hard to tell you in a summary form what all of your duties are because so many new things are constantly appearing in Alaska. You are regarded by us: First, as the Chairman of the Committee on National Missions and, second, in a very special way as representing the Board's interests in Southeast Alaska. Your committee, however, has nothing to do with the work or interests of the Division of Schools and Hospitals which conducts the work at Sheldon Jackson and at Haines.

5- I have already written to the effect that an additional grant of \$100. has been made toward the maintenance of the Lindsley and we are ready to make another \$50. grant or more, if necessary, when that amount is exhausted. In view of this I can see no object to be gained in writing to Dr. Bowman about it.

6- I note what you say about Swanson. The negotiations for his coming to Alaska were carried on by Dr. Diven. He had promised \$1700. and the agreement was made with Swanson on that basis. Diven's theory was to try to raise the salaries of the men in Alaska as fast as possible to a \$2000. basis, and you will remember that that was his idea with reference to your salary also. It is true that Pederson got at the rate of \$1300. at Skagway, but his grant as successor to Dr. Diven is at the rate of \$1600. The difference between Swanson and the pastors is that Swanson will receive no supplementary money from his parishioners, whereas we sincerely hope that Pederson and all the rest of the missionaries will receive an increasingly large amount of salary from local sources. We must push to this end because ultimately the church in Alaska must

October 21, 1930

come to self-support. That is a long way ahead, of course, but perhaps that will explain the situation. However, if your committee feels that adjustments should be made as between the men themselves on the field, we will very carefully consider any recommendations which you may make.

7- In accordance with Dr. Diven's recommendation I made a docket for McKay at the rate of \$100. for six months. We can docket him for the month of March, which will secure practically what you have promised, if you think best.

8- Let me note here that the Board's year ends on March 31 and we make no commitments that carry beyond that period. For that reason I docketed Dewitt and Kunz for only seven months from September first. If they are to serve during April and May of next year that can be provided for out of the budget for next year.

9- I note that in the askings you reduced the native church allowance toward your salary from \$600. to \$500. because of the \$1500. expected from the Board of Education. I think it pretty certain now after I have had several informal conferences with members of the Board of Education that they will not give \$1500. next year. They might give a small sum. What they mean by a small sum I am unable to guess. I should suppose that probably we ought not to expect more than \$250. It looks to me now as if our Board will have to bear for a year or two until we can make adjustments with this other board the brunt of the Sitka experiment. You must not have your salary decreased nor must it be put in hazard. We will go just as fast and as far as we can within our limits, year by year. I am of the opinion that we will be able to make certain adjustments so as to get a new man next year. If we can obtain promises of a part of his salary from the Board of Education and from other sources, it will help just that much.

10- I note that you put down \$500. for the rent of a man requiring a real house. That is very wise, and I am glad to attempt it.

11- The money is still available for a building in Douglas and in case Mr. Waggoner finds property in Douglas that looks like a good buy, have him notify the Board before any commitment is made. This will probably be the most efficient way of handling the matter in the long run.

12- There are two mansees, as you know, in Juneau. One of them is occupied by Mr. Waggoner and the other, as I understand it, is rented. The rent is expected to go, every penny of it, to the Board in order that it may maintain its insurance on these properties, its repairs, assessments, etc.

13- I regret to tell you that I cannot give you the history of our property in Juneau. If the old native church was sold, it was before I took over the work and I have nothing definite in the files.

14- Mr. Falconer has been paid the \$241. which he advanced out of his own pocket for the repairs at Saxman. I hope he does not hold anything against either the Committee or the Board. If he will reflect he will certainly see that neither the Committee nor the Board forced him out of Ketchikan. It was the insistent demand of the people there, his own congregation, who brought about his leaving.

15- I do not think that it would do any good to write to the Board of Education regarding your school project. They do not make grants, as I understand it, for equipment and matters of that kind. If, however, you feel that you would like to write, the proper person would be The Rev. Frederick E. Stockwell, D. D., Witherspoon Building, Philadelphia.

Rev. Jackson L. Webster

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Oct. 21, 1930

I note what you say about Dr. Oxtoby and about Rev. Stanley Knott. I hope he will come in to see me, if he is in New York.

I have tried to answer your questions as briefly and yet as comprehensively as possible. Come again. I like to receive letters of this type.

With kind regards to you and Mrs. Webster, I am,

Yours very cordially

A. J. Montgomery, Director
Town and Country Department

AJM-VP

NATIONAL MISSIONS

ROBERT JOSEPH DIVEN, D. D.
Chairman of the Committee
Box 275, Wrangell, Alaska
REV. GEORGE J. BECK, Hoonah
REV. DAVID WAGGONER, Juneau

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

REV. DAVID WAGGONER
Chairman of the Committee
Sunday School Missionary
Stated Clerk and Treasurer
Box 964, Juneau, Alaska

PRESBYTERY OF ALASKA

Sitka, November 22, 1930

Rev. Andrew J. Montgomery
156 Fifth Ave.
New York, N. Y.

DEC 9 1930

Dear Dr. Montgomery,

"Blue Monday" was the right name for last Monday when I got your letter announcing the fading of our hopes for a second man at Sitka. I fear my answer sounded as blue as I was. The next morning as I was reading the twelfth chapter of John God spoke to me on the subject in the 27th and 28th verses. I had taken the disappointment in the spirit of Christ's first prayer "Father save me from this hour." I decided to follow His example and change to the second "Father, glorify thy name." To say, instead of Save me, Use me for Thy glory. And God said He would. So I have been pegging away this week readjusting my plans and getting ready to start the theological work next Monday. We'll do our best and trust that somehow the disappointment will work together for good both to me and the field.

20. Your letter of Oct. 17 I have not yet answered and it contained good news - money for books. I have already spent more than one hundred for a library. That was the amount you granted you remember out of the salvage from my assistant. Then I have spent about twenty dollars for textbooks, some of which we will get back from the boys. I thought I would offer to furnish the textbooks for their use but require them to pay for them if they want to own them. The new books I have bought and those we got from Dr. Condit, together with those which I am lending from my own library, make a fairly good library for starting out. Other books I would like very much to add are The Cambridge Bible set, Hastings Dictionary Of Christ And The Gospels, some good secular histories - ancient and European - to supplement church history, and biographies of great church leaders. If this is not enough to absorb the surplus money, let me know and I will suggest more speedily. Thankyou.

Don't want
the
main
Regarding the division of our native church, I find that there is not a unanimous opinion about it among the church officers and so believe we had better let it wait. For the present I am going to try to hold a special service in the village once a month, Sunday evening. This will require getting some sort of substitute for the white service; but I think I can fix it. I want to get hold of the village young people. I am not devoting much time to the white church at present. Most of the time I have taken for the new responsibilities has been taken away from them. I conduct Sunday School and evening service and that is about all

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PRESBYTERY OF ALASKA

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except for spending an afternoon with the Pioneers each week and conducting their funerals. As to the village, I expect good results from the work of my theological students there. I can do practically no calling while I carry both committee and school in addition to the two churches.

We have decided to hold the school at S. J. S., using a classroom next to the office which is no longer used for S. J. S. classes. They are also co-operating freely in furnishing the room and equipment of various kinds, treating us as though we were one of their own classes, but not trying to control. I am of course seeking their counsel in everything. The curriculum I am setting out to teach consists of four courses: Old Testament, New Testament, Homiletics, and Church History. We have twenty four weeks left in the school year; and by meeting two classes a day I will have sixty classes for each course.

*Memo.
for Brown*

In the re-shingling of this manse, twenty five dollars was advanced from Presbytery's corporation funds to meet the freight. I lost sight of it and Mr. Waggoner has called my attention to the fact that the money has never come from the board. It shows in the accounts which are now with the treasurer. Checking up will show that the board paid out twenty five dollars less than the job cost. Will you try to adjust the matter and send the check to Mr. Waggoner?

I enjoyed your recent article in The Advance on Mormonism. I have been meaning to study up on it and speak about it some Sunday evening down town. I sent in a story to The Advance recently about my trip to presbytery at Ketchikan. Called it "All Aboard For The Presbytery Of Alaska." Have not heard from them yet as to whether they care to use it.

With best regards, I am

Cordially Yours,

Jackson L. Webster
Jackson L. Webster
Acting Chairman N. M. Committee

NATIONAL MISSIONS

ROBERT JOSEPH DIVEN, D. D.
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Box 275, Wrangell, Alaska
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PRESBYTERY OF ALASKA

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

REV. DAVID WAGGONER
Chairman of the Committee
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Stated Clerk and Treasurer
Box 964, Juneau, Alaska

Sitka, Alaska

November 28, 1930

Rev. A. J. Montgomery,
156-5th Ave.,
New York City, N. Y.

Dear Doctor Montgomery:

In the estimate of expense which I sent you for the year 1931-32, I left the items of repairs and improvements blank. I now have estimates from Mr. Waggoner on most of these items as follows:

Klawock church: Repairs \$50.00 (This item has already been granted for this year and the materials have been sent to Wanamaker, but we do not know whether he has finished the job yet or not.)

Hydaburg manse: Roof \$155.00

Kake manse: Repairs as listed approximately \$300.00

Juneau, general missionary's manse:	Painting	\$125.00
	New roof	135.00
	Total	\$260.00

Juneau, Waggoner's manse: Painting \$250.00
(All Juneau work should be under one contract for economy)

Klukwan: New roof (materials only) \$225.00

Haines church: Basement \$2880.00

Wrangell manse: New roof - shingles	\$286.00
Labor	144.00
Total	\$430.00

(This is Mr. Waggoner's estimate)

Pederson has a bid from a local contractor for \$350.00, but Waggoner thinks the job cannot be done with first-class shingles at that price. Some of the labor cost can be saved by Pederson's help.

We started our theological school a couple of days ago, and I am busy as a bee with that and other things, so I won't stop to write more at this time.

DEC 10 1930

DEC 10

Memor
Brumer

with
Dunsmuir

out

4050:

NATIONAL MISSIONS

ROBERT JOSEPH DIVEN, D. D.
Chairman of the Committee
Box 275, Wrangell, Alaska

REV. GEORGE J. BECK, Hoonah
REV. DAVID WAGGONER, Juneau

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PRESBYTERY OF ALASKA

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November 28, 1930

I had a letter from Donald Latimer saying that he would like to come to Skagway, but that he does not feel he can leave Midletown for a few months. I suggest that we leave Skagway vacant until he can come. He sounds to me like a fine fellow whom we will be fortunate to get into the Presbytery. I have written him asking that he write you if he has not already done so.

Sincerely yours,

Jackson L. Webster

December 1, 1930

I employed a stenographer to take some letters for me last week in accord with your suggestion when you were here; but perhaps you will feel that that must be revoked too. I had to have help. I believe some small amount like five or ten dollars a month will pay for enough help to enable me to keep on top.

At a meeting of the session of the white church last night they decided to present resolutions to the congregational meeting (Dec. 9) as follows:
1. That the church organization be dissolved. Or
2. That the church be closed for a year and that the building be rented.

Our congregations have been considerably smaller this year than last and getting steadily worse. Some of the largest contributors (notably the Condits) have left Sitka and there is no hope of raising a budget as large as last year, and that had been reduced to a minimum. Everyone feels that the expenditure of money and effort is too large for the response we are getting from the town people. It would be different if there were no other church; but anyone who wishes can attend the morning service. I do not know what action will be taken; but I expect to see the second resolution carry. As to the result of it, it will make it possible for the native church to rent the building and use it. It will free me for more work in the village and open the way for the organization of a separate church when progress warrants it. It will probably lead the S. J. S. staff to transfer their membership to the native church and thus leave very slight remains of the white church making it improbable that it will resume unless the town grows. It will also give the Episcopalians an opportunity to do better, if they care to try.

*Packet
\$5 a mo
5/25*

NATIONAL MISSIONS

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Chairman of the Committee
Box 275, Wrangell, Alaska

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PRESBYTERY
OF ALASKA

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These are just guesses of course; but I believe they are strong probabilities. I won't attempt to discuss details till after the meeting when something has been decided.

A letter from Mr. Beck asks for authorization to rent a house at the expense of the board for more than twentyfive dollars, the house allowance you were giving Mr. Falconer. I am writing him that I do not feel sure you can grant it because of your financial situation; but assuring him that he can depend on the twentyfive. Please write him about that and his moving expenses which he also asks about in his letter. Should I send in a requisition for them? Please send me some of your expense vouchers.

A letter from Pederson suggests that the Lindsley be given into his hands for use out of Wrangell. Mrs. Tamaree also supports the request and names places where work should be done but which the Princeton does not reach. She also nominates herself for the eldership and General Assembly at Pittsburg. I imagine Mr. Waggoner will be opposed to giving the boat to Pederson, partly on the ground that it will be in his territory, and partly on the ground of prejudice against Pederson. Mr. Waggoner will be in here before long and then we will have to agree on something to recommend.

Sam Johnson of Angoon writes that he is willing to go to Hoonah but wants to know whether he is to appoint someone to take his place at Angoon, whether Mr. Waggoner will take him over, and whether he has to keep the Lindsley in the summer time. I thought Mr. Waggoner had settled all these things with him but apparently not. Am writing him that another man will come to Hoonah in the spring and that he will be relieved of the Lindsley before summer. Also appointing George Betz to substitute for him at Angoon while he is away. This at recommendation of Mr. Waggoner. Hope to get your approval. Perhaps I should wait for that; but it does not seem right to leave Hoonah vacant in view of Salvation Army attack.

Must close. With best regards

Sincerely Yours

Jackson L. Webster

Acting Chairman N. K. Committee

P.S. What about salaries for Samuel G. Johnson at Hoonah and George Betz at Angoon? Will Betz get Johnson's salary and Johnson get same at Hoonah or will he get Beck's rate which at Hoonah?

December 11, 1930

Rev. Jackson L. Webster
Sitka, Alaska.

My dear Mr. Webster:

Your letter of November 28 is before me. I notice the list of repairs and new buildings amounting in all to \$4050. The Klawock item of \$50. is a grant already made and if Andrew Wanamaker has not received the money, he may receive it on requisition.

Several days ago I asked the Treasurer to send a check of \$350. to Pederson for the roof of the Wrangell manse. This was the first estimate which we received and as we had to act quickly to get it before the Board which met November 28, the grant was made. If there is a balance needed, perhaps we may be able to get it.

I note your paragraph in the letter written December first which follows on the November 28 letter. I am making a docket of \$5. a month for five months from November 1 to cover stenographic help. All you have to do is to put the \$5. item for this purpose on your monthly voucher and it will come with your regular check. Of course this is for this year only. I do not know what we may be able to do next year.

I note what you say about the meeting of the session of the white church, looking toward their dissolution or closing for a year. I shall wait further information with a great deal of expectation.

I am writing Mr. Beck about his rent and moving expenses. We can only give \$25. a month for the time being. Later on we may be able to docket the entire amount to cover whatever a house may cost Mr. Beck in Ketchikan.

I have not received as yet your recommendation about the Lindsley boat. My notion would be that it would be very wise to put it in Pederson's hands until the time comes when we can place an agricultural missionary at Hoonah. I suppose there are some objections, possibly, to Pederson's having the boat, but on the whole I believe he can make better use of it this winter than anybody else.

I am docketing Sam Johnson for Hoonah at the rate of \$75. a month. This is the amount which is paid to J.S. Brown and other native helpers. At the same time I have docketed, at your suggestion, George Betz at Angoon in the amount of \$75. a month. As soon as the docket has been approved and comes back to me, I will send the necessary vouchers, etc. to these men.

Yours very cordially

A. J. Montgomery, Director
Town and Country Department

AJM-VP

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

JACKSON L. WEBSTER, PASTOR

SITKA, ALASKA

June 11, 1937.

Dr. J. M. Somerndike,
156 Fifth Avenue,
New York City, N. Y.

Dear Dr. Somerndike:

Our Young People's Conference has just closed and you will be glad to know that we had the largest enrollment of any year and in some other ways the most encouraging conference. Miss Mead made a very good Dean and Mr. Beck who gave the vesper talks made a deep impression on the young people with his fine Christian personality. He used a story each evening as the basis for his message and I am sure the young people will not soon forget them. One of the most interesting was on our picnic to Pirates' Cove, a lovely little bay about twelve miles from town. Mr. Beck told us of a couple who had spent their honeymoon there about forty years ago and of their wonderful Christian experience together and the great adventure of marriage. Some of us knew all the time of whom he was talking about but I think some of the young people didn't until he said that the honeymoon had lasted until God had called Mrs. Beck home three years ago. We had our campfire and were sitting on the very spot where they had their tent. The Princeton had to make two trips each way and for those of us who waited for the second trip to go home quite a humorous situation developed with the rising tide. Some of the ladies were determined to keep their places by the campfire until the boat came but the tide arrived a little bit ahead of the boat. One of the greatest values in these Young People's Conferences is the demonstration of the fact that Christian young people of different races can be friends and find a real fellowship together.

Several of us spent sometime yesterday afternoon talking of the proposal which has been made the Presbytery for the last two years to have a team of selected workers make a tour of the Presbytery putting on an evangelistic and leadership training program in the different towns. Mr. Swagger said that you felt that it would not be practical to devote the Princeton to this work for the time necessary to cover the Presbytery effectively. As a substitute plan I proposed that the stronger churches should send teams to their weaker neighbors to put on such a program for perhaps a week. I am anxious to know what your attitude would be toward this. It was the plan which the Presbytery followed in its early days as you probably know. Each pastor was responsible not only for his own field but for two or three of the villages nearest to him. I talked with Betts

and Wanamaker at the meeting of Presbytery about the possibility of our coming to visit them this fall, and they both felt that it would be a great help to their work. My thought was that we might put on a school of Christian leadership and some Bible classes during the day and hold evangelistic services at night. There would, of course, be considerable expense involved and we wondered if the Board would feel like helping on that.

We had our enrollment for Vacation Bible School today and will begin classes Monday with about forty children. Many of our native families have already gone away to the canneries. I expect to spend the last week of the month visiting Todd and Chatham canneries where most of our people work. Then I will sail about July 1st for the meeting of Synod in Seattle. I will visit my relatives in California during the latter part of the month and consult a specialist in San Francisco regarding my hip trouble.

The Session wrote you and Mr. Glasse a few weeks ago regarding the furniture of our Sitka white church building. I don't remember whether or not we made it clear in that letter that we would be glad to pay for the furniture. I think, perhaps, it would be wiser for us to do so in spite of the fact that much of it was bought originally by people who are now members of our church. However it is done I think the furniture should be used for our present active work rather than being allowed to deteriorate with the old unused building. We have not been able to find any one as a prospective buyer for the building. There are two institutions who would like to have the property on which it stands, the Pioneers' Home and the U.S. Bureau School. They could divide it very advantageously between them and should be willing to pay a fairly good price for it. But I am afraid the building is going to be almost a dead loss. We took an experienced building man to look at it a few weeks ago and he said that due to the leakage that had evidently been going on in the walls for many years he thought that much of the material of the building would not be fit to use again. My feeling is that the best thing we can do in the matter is to offer the building for sale to the highest bidder regardless of price.

I haven't heard whether you are going to be at Synod or not but hope I may see you there and talk these things over with you personally.

With kindest regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

Jackson L. Webster

Dr. Townsend:
Thank you very much
for the book. I
have read part of it for the
last part of the evening.
Yours truly,
Harold Hayes.

June 24th, 1937

Rev. Jackson L. Webster
First Presby. Church
Sitka, Alaska

Dear Mr. Webster:

I was very much pleased with the good news contained in your letter of June 11th concerning the success of the young people's conference. I am deeply interested in the possibilities of this conference, and I am glad to note the splendid support which our ministers in Alaska Presbytery are giving to the project.

With reference to your proposal that at a favorable time during the year a plan of church visitation be worked out for the Alaska Presbytery which would enable each church to have a visit from the pastor of another church, accompanied by several of his workers, I think it has excellent possibilities provided it does not take too much of the time of Mr. Swanson from other important work to which he is definitely assigned by the Presbytery.

There are two things that need to be kept in mind with reference to the Princeton boat. The first is that Mr. Swanson is a missionary and that his services as a missionary should be utilized in the most practicable way. The second is that the boat must be the vehicle for the promotion of our missionary work and not simply a public carrier of which Mr. Swanson is the skipper subject to calls from every direction but without any definitely planned itinerary.

I believe that if the plan you have in mind could be worked out so that one month of the year would be devoted to a church visitation campaign, each church being visited by the pastor and workers from the neighboring church, it would bring an inspiration and a blessing to each church. I think that it is important to have the pastor of the church at home when the visiting pastor comes. In other words, I do not think that the idea of exchanging pulpits is very helpful because by the time a minister gets back to his own church his visitor has gone and they have no opportunity to confer about the work. Moreover the program does not go off half so well when the minister is away from

his home base and a visitor is in charge. I think that if the plan were worked out in such a way that each minister could visit about three other churches, the whole campaign could be worked out within a month or six weeks.

The fly in the ointment is the matter of expense. I have no money in the Alaska budget to provide for any new projects this year, and before I give final word of agreement to your proposal it would be necessary for me to have some idea as to how much expense would be involved. Would it not be a good idea for each church to pay the expense of its minister and workers when they visit another field? That would accomplish what you have in mind without involving any additional expense to the Board.

I assume, since you are attending the meeting of the Synod, that you have been elected a Commissioner to the Synod from your Presbytery.

With reference to the matter of the furniture from the Sitka White Church building, I wish to say that I do not think it is necessary for us to impose any charges upon your people, for the use of this furniture. Since it would be irreparably damaged by remaining in the building, it seems the sensible thing to remove it and take it into your church building where it will not only be used but will be given proper care.

I am heartily in favor of disposing of the building, as you have suggested, to the highest bidder, if that is in accord with the desire of the Presbytery. You will remember that we referred this matter to the Presbytery for advice as to the course that should be pursued.

With best wishes, I am

Faithfully yours,

P.S. Referring to the last paragraph above, I am informed that the Presbytery asked the Board to send a representative to Alaska to advise with reference to this matter. No representative of the Board can go to Alaska this summer. If it cannot be settled by the Presbytery, as it ought to be, the final disposition will have to wait until I am in Alaska next summer, as I fully expect to be there at that time.

JMS:PDS

J. M. S.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

JACKSON L. WEBSTER, PASTOR

SITKA, ALASKA

Sept. 10, 1937

Dr. J. M. Somerville
156 Fifth Ave.
New York, N.Y.

Dear Dr. Somerville,

As you know, we are hoping to build a new church here and I want to talk to you about it. The present status is this: We have \$3,000. on hand which we have raised in the last two years and expect to increase it at the same rate this year. We have permission from Presbytery to build a new building on the present site, but are forbidden to do so till the old white building is disposed of. We have agreed on preliminary sketches made by a member of our building committee and will probably engage an architect soon to draw preliminary plans. The present one room frame building is inadequate for our program and is also wearing out. It was built in 1892. The floor is sagging and the frame spreading.

[What will the Board be willing

to do to help us in our building? Would you be in favor of giving us the old White building to tear down and use the materials? And would the Board be willing to give us financial aid, perhaps matching what we are able to raise locally - I say \$5,000.? We hope to secure much of the labor on a volunteer basis and so keep costs down, perhaps not exceeding \$10,000.

I have postponed presenting this matter to you because of the Juneau church building project. Hearing recently that their building is postponed, I am wondering if it might be wise for us to push ahead and try to put ours through during the coming year. A friend who might be interested in helping us is Mr. Schreide of Pennsylvania. He and Mrs. Schreide and Dr. Foulkes ate dinner with us at the time of their visit in 1935 and have written to us several times since. Another possible source of help would be the Department of Schools and Hospitals, because of Sheldon Jackson's dependance upon the church plant for its work of Christian Education.

Please advise me on the matter and inquire about any phase of it I have not made clear.

Sincerely yours

Jackson L. Webster

P.S.

At our meeting last Sunday, Session voted to move the furniture from the White Church building and to use the pews. They will replace about one third of the present pews in our church.

We are working on our budget for the coming year and I will write you again about that soon. We make our canvass Sunday, the 19th.

J. L. A.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Jackson L. Webster, Pastor

Sitka, Alaska.

November 2, 1937.

Dr. J. M. Somerndike,
156 Fifth Avenue,
New York City, N.Y.

Dear Dr. Somerndike:

At our congregational meeting Sunday, October 24th the congregation adopted a budget which included a three hundred dollar item towards salary. I spoke in favor of three hundred and sixty dollars and believe that would have passed, if a terrible blast of wind had not struck the church while I was speaking. The old frame building is in a very bad state of repair and when that blast struck us it sounded as though the whole building were going to collapse. After the moment of frightened silence which followed, I said spontaneously, "Perhaps, we had better include in this budget a larger item for repairs". That proved to be the mind of the meeting: that we should put everything possible into the matter of a new building until that is accomplished. Also they liked the idea which one of the speakers stressed of steady progress towards self support. They felt that if we increased too much this year we would not be able to go forward again next year.

In our application for aid which I sent to Mr. Glasse last week we reduced our asking from \$1210.00 that we have had during the past year to \$1150.00. I wonder if you realize, Dr. Somerndike, that our church has made a gain towards self-support which does not show in these "application for aid" figures. During the past few years we have undertaken the whole task of maintenance of our church which was formerly carried largely by the Board. The last help we received in that line I think was about eighty dollars which was given us four or five years ago to buy paint. Since then we have spent two hundred dollars for the new church hymnal and about three hundred dollars for a new furnace. These are things on which the church would have asked for help in former years but now our people have completely accepted the idea of maintaining our own plant.

In my survey of the field I replied to the question as to how soon our church might reach self support with this answer "Ten years, if the new building can be erected free of debt". We have raised about eighteen hundred dollars in the past two years for our local work, and last year gave more than five hundred to the Boards. I think that there is every reason to believe that this will increase steadily if the new building is erected and that if the Board will give us the necessary help to leave the

the new plant free of debt we can achieve self-support by 1947. I am hoping to hear from you soon on this matter.

I did not expect you to return the V.C.S. frieze sheets which I sent you. You should have dropped them in the waste basket. I only wanted you to get an idea of the kind of work our children were doing. Everything is going along splendidly now and I believe that God is going to give us the most fruitful year of our pastorate thus far. I began my tenth year of service here at Sitka last Sunday. The people responded splendidly to our Foreign Missions Centennial and I think it is going to stimulate us in all departments of our work.

Sincerely yours,

Jackson L. Webster

Nov.
15th
1937

Rev. Jackson L. Webster,
Sitka, Alaska

Dear Mr. Webster:

I have your interesting letter of November 2nd. We put you into the regular Alaska budget for this year at a salary of \$1100, and we added an increase of \$75, making your total salary for this year beginning October 1st \$1175, with the expectation that the congregation would make up the difference between that amount and \$1525 which is now the basic salary of all the Alaska missionaries. This would mean that your congregation would raise \$350 this year. I note from your letter, however, that it is not possible for them to assume more than \$300. We shall therefore put you into the budget for the year beginning October 1st at the rate of \$1225 from the Board, with the understanding that the church will give you \$300 additional. Adjustment will be made in your salary payment for December.

You are to be congratulated upon the splendid progress that your congregation has made along financial lines under your leadership. They have done remarkably well in the contributions they have made toward repairs to the building, the purchase of hymnals, etc., and in the steady progress they are making toward self-support. It will be a great achievement if the church can reach self-support within ten years, as you have suggested in your letter.

With every good wish, I am

Faithfully yours,

JMS:BE

November 18th, 1937

Rev. Jackson L. Webster
First Presby. Church
Sitka, Alaska

Dear Mr. Webster:

I think I owe you an apology for not having replied to your letter of September 10th in which you wrote to me about the financing of your new church building project. The reason for the delay in answering it was because I wanted to have a full conference with Miss Voss as to the possibility of applying some funds of the Unit of Educational and Medical Work to this project. She has been out of the office for several weeks this fall, and so have I, and we have not been able until recently to talk over this matter. I find that the Unit of Educational and Medical Work has expended all the money they had on hand from bequests and special gifts that could be made available for building projects, so that avenue of possible assistance is closed.

The only way in which we can obtain assistance from the Board is to make your application for a grant out of our Church Erection Funds in the same formal manner that every church is required to adopt in seeking aid of this character. I note that the Presbytery has decreed that your new building shall be erected on the present site, but that nothing is to be done with reference to this matter until the White Presbyterian church in which the Board still has an investment of nearly \$7,000 on an unpaid loan is disposed of.

Your telegram, received just two days ago, requests our approval of an option to sell the building to Mr. Moller for \$1,500 cash. You state that you have sent a duplicate of this wire to Mr. Glasse and I assume that you expected Mr. Glasse to advise us as to the attitude of his Committee on National Missions toward this proposal of Mr. Moller. As soon as I hear from Mr. Glasse, I will take up the matter with those in charge of the funds which were invested in the White church building and ascertain whether they will be willing to accept \$1,500 as salvage on this investment, charging off the

remainder as a loss to our Church Erection Funds.

It is difficult for me to answer your question as to "what would the Board be willing to do to help us in our church building". On a building that represents a total cost of \$10,000 you would be permitted, under the rules of the General Assembly, to make application for a grant of \$3,300.

The Juneau church building project is being financed out of a special gift of Mr. Scheide who is particularly interested in Mr. Waggoner and the work at Juneau. I do not think it would be advisable to write to him requesting a contribution for your proposed building at Sitka since he has not yet paid into the Board's treasury the amount of the gift which he has pledged for the new native church at Juneau. Also, under the rules of the Board I would have to obtain a special action from the Board granting you permission to solicit gifts in the Church at large - either from individuals or from churches - toward your building enterprise. The Board has ruled against this practice because in nearly every case where such solicitations have been made those who have responded have been regular givers for the support of the current work of the Board, and in their desire to respond to the special appeal they have directed the Board to use the gift which they were accustomed to send to us for the support of our current work for this specific enterprise, thus depriving the Board of the usual amount which they would have given to carry on the current work.

You state that you can raise locally the sum of \$5,000. I assume that this \$5,000 will represent cash. You state that the cost of the building, including a good deal of donated labor, would represent about \$10,000. On that basis you could obtain a grant of \$3,300 out of our Church Erection Funds which would leave \$1,700 which the church would contribute in the form of volunteer or donated labor. Could the situation be worked out on that basis? That is to say, could you erect the building with \$5,000 cash which you will raise locally and with \$3,300 cash which the Board might be willing to grant? (Please note that I am not making a definite promise on behalf of our Church Building Aid Department that a grant of \$3,300 will be made.) If so, I would suggest that you write to Dr. A.B. Keeler, Secretary of the Building Aid Funds, asking him to send you an application and stating that you wish to make a request for a grant of \$3,300 on the basis of a total cost in cash and labor of \$10,000. He will then send you the necessary papers and give you full instructions.

Now, if I have not made myself clear, and if there is any further information which you would like to have, because I would like to be as helpful as possible in guiding you aright in this important enterprise, do not hesitate to write me.

Faithfully yours,

Nov. 20, 1937

Rev. J. L. Webster
Sitka
Alaska

Sitka, First, Alaska
L. A. #1138 - \$4,000.-
Gt. #5253 - 4,000.-

Dear Mr. Webster:

Dr. Somerndike referred to my office your telegram of November 13th in which you notified us that Dan H. Moller of the U. S. Forest Service wishes a thirty day option to purchase the White Church building for \$1,500 cash.

As you no doubt know, this Board holds two mortgages on this church property, totaling \$8,000, and since the church building has not been used we are legally entitled to interest on these mortgages. However, our committee has approved of accepting the \$1,500, although it is a very heavy loss to us.

Since we hold the mortgages only and do not hold title to the property, the deed will have to be made out locally to the purchaser. It is my understanding that the title is in the trustees of the church and they would be the proper ones to give the deed. Please have this matter taken care of by said trustees, and make certain that the sale is approved by the Presbytery, which should have full knowledge of the transaction.

In the event Mr. Moller decides to exercise his option (which should be carefully prepared and forwarded to this Board together with \$10.00), I would suggest that we close the transaction in the following manner:

Arrange with a local bank to act as escrow agent, the Board to forward its mortgages, together with releases to the bank, and the purchaser will pay the \$1,500 to said bank to the Board's account. The bank will then forward to the Board a cashier's check for \$1,500 and deliver the mortgages and releases to the purchaser.

Sincerely,

C. W. Wonnacott, Treasurer
by:

LHT:EH L. H. Tribus, Assistant
c.c. Rev. John A. Glasse to the Treasurer
Juneau, Alaska

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

JACKSON L. WEBSTER, PASTOR

SITKA, ALASKA

April 8, 1938

Rev. J. M. Somerndike
156 Fifth Ave.
New York, N. Y.

Dear Dr. Somerndike,

Your kindly letter of March 23rd was waiting for me when I returned from Angoon yesterday morning. I was sorry not to have carried out your suggestion regarding a new action from presbytery approving our site; but in view of events at presbytery I doubt if you will now think it necessary. Mr. Glasse and Mr. Swanson were the only two members of presbytery who were actively opposed to our location (as to Mr. Waggoner's) and since both are now off the National Missions Committee, I think we need not worry further about their opposition. Presbytery took definite action last year approving our present site for the new building.

Your hope for a definite settlement of the Juneau question was fulfilled, as you have no doubt heard. The same two men mentioned above were the only ones voting against the petition of the First Church. A very patient moderator allowed the matter to drag on for five hours, although it was perfectly clear long before that what the outcome was to be. I felt that the whole matter had a touch of the ridiculous about it, something like an elephant trumpeting in alarm, lest the mouse should step on his toe. I cannot see what Northern Light has to fear from the little First Church. They are ministering to different groups, different elements of the population, which are not entirely separated in location. Personally I do not believe that Northern Light will be effected at all by the change in location. I sincerely hope that it will strengthen Mr. Waggoner's ministry to the underprivileged groups of the city. I doubt if Mr. Glasse's session will support him in his desire to appeal the decision to Synod; and if they should, I see no prospect of Synod's reversing us. The case was simple, had been before presbytery for two years, the procedure was regular, the vote decisive; what grounds would Synod have for reversing presbytery?

We hope that you will approve of the reply we made to the invitation to join the United Christian Council of Alaska. We tried to steer between the Scylla of joining and the Charybdis of appearing to oppose interdenominational cooperation. The mind of presbytery was unanimous on the matter. I hope too that you will be able to cooperate with us in the plan for missions from the stronger churches to the weaker ones, similar to the visit we made to Angoon last November. It will do much to strengthen our work. The

Princeton will be needed to help in many of the missions, though our Sitka church, with the help of the Sheldon Jackson School and her boat the "S. J. S.", will probably be able to finance the missions we undertake. We would like to visit Hoonah, Angoon, and Kake, and possibly Chichigoff. There are two large mines there, but little or no religious work has ever been done. I hope also to do some mission work this summer. (The church missions are planned for the fall.) Possibly I could hold a Vacation Bible School in Chichigoff.

At the request of the dean of the Young People's conference, I have undertaken to prepare a course on Alaskan missions. The conference is set for June first, so there is not much time to work it out; but it will be an interesting piece of work. I am hoping that you will be able to help me in securing information about the work of the other churches, Protestant, Greek Orthodox, and Roman Catholic. I would like to secure a survey of the history, statistics, and present policies and significance of each denomination now working in the territory. I have fairly good information on our Presbyterian work available in Board reports, biographies, and minutes. But I would greatly appreciate a letter from you dealing with goals and policies for the future, and giving your opinion on such questions as these:

1. In view of the Federal government's policy of tax-exemption and increasing economic aid for our native people, can we hope to make their churches self-supporting?

2. Have we been wise in giving up our hospital work to the government? And all our schools except S. J. S.? Will we give it up too, when the Federal and Territorial educational systems become more complete and efficient?

3. Why is our religious education so much weaker than our government secular education? How can we strengthen it?

4. Are there areas of Alaska still unreached by the church? Who should be taking the responsibility to reach them?

5. How can we achieve better interdenominational cooperation? What would you suggest as first steps?

I must stop now though there are other things I want to talk over with you. I will write again soon. Thank you for the two checks which came safely.

With kindest regards, I am

Sincerely Yours,

Jackson L. Webster

April 26th, 1938

Rev. Jackson L. Webster
First Presby. Church
Sitka, Alaska

Dear Mr. Webster:

I have your very interesting letter of April 8th. I am satisfied to accept the decision of the presbytery relative to the site for the new native church in Juneau. I am sorry that Mr. Glasse and Mr. Waggoner cannot see eye to eye with reference to this matter. It would be so much more pleasant if the Lord's work could be done with good feeling all around instead of seeming to excite, as it does in some people, emotions that are quite contrary to those that are truly Christian. I have never been able to become reconciled to the idea of men engaging in prayer together and then five minutes after proceeding to wound each other with harsh words which so often leaves deeper wounds than physical violence.

I wish that I could give you the information that you want about the other churches in Alaska, but I am afraid that I cannot help you very much. I know that there are 44 Roman Catholic missions in the whole Alaska territory and they claim a constituency of about 5,000. You of course know the location of all of our Presbyterian stations. The Baptists are located in Cook Inlet on Copper River and Prince William Sound and are conducting an orphanage at Wood Island. The Methodists have six missions in the entire territory including the Jessie Lee Home. The Swedish Lutherans have three missions; Norwegian Lutherans have one; Moravians have a mission at Kivinak and at Bethel and Carmel where they are conducting schools under contract with the government. The Society of Friends carries on work at Douglas City. They have three missions in the area of Kotzebue Sound. They are engaged mainly in giving practical instruction in training apprentices for the reindeer industry. The Congregationalists have a mission at Valdez and another at Nome. The Protestant Episcopal Church has 23 stations in Alaska.

I shall endeavor to answer your questions in categorical order:

1. It is difficult to predict the possibilities of making our churches in Alaska self-supporting. I do not believe that the government's policy of "tax exemption" and "increasing economic aid" is the main factor in determining the question as to whether our churches can become self-supporting. The support of the church is a matter of expressing one's own religious impulses and understanding. It has to do also with the truly Christian principle of self-sacrifice. If people give to the church only what they have left after they have satisfied all their wants, it is going to be difficult for churches ever to become self-supporting, but if people adopt the Christian principle of giving in support of the gospel by contributing as much as they possibly can out of their love for Christ and for His cause, determined to satisfy their physical wants on as small an amount as possible, there would be plenty of money to support all the churches in the world.

2. I believe that we are wise in permitting the government to operate hospitals and schools after the religious denominations have blazed the way for them in remote communities which would have received no educational or medical service at all if it had not been for the work of the mission boards. The government is so slow in reaching out into new fields because the administration of public funds is controlled so largely by political influences that many places that now have educational and medical service would never yet have been reached with such service if the Church had not first opened the way. Certainly a liberal portion of the taxes paid by all the people should be available for the amelioration of the ills and adversities of some of the people. We think of the government as ours, not as an institution outside of ourselves. The people own the government, and if the people decide that through governmental agencies they will provide better health service and education service for the most remote, it is a perfectly proper and Christian thing for a Christian democracy like ours to do.

3. Our religious education activities can be strengthened when our religious leaders become aware first of the necessity of giving more attention to the teaching and training of the rising generation, and second when they realize that people do not grow in Christ and in a knowledge of the Lord and of the principles of Christian living simply by hearing a sermon once a week or less. All the Protestant denominations have excellent programs of religious education. The difficulty is not because of any lack of program but it is because of the failure of our leaders to use the programs which have been provided for them.

4. Undoubtedly there are areas in Alaska that are unreached by the Church. The territory in Alaska has been allocated

among the denominations in order to preserve the spirit of comity. If each denomination would work the territory which has been allocated to it, a much greater work would be going on. Of course the reason they do not expand is because money is not available to support any new work.

5. The way to achieve better inter-denominational cooperation is for the representatives of each denomination to manifest a spirit of good will toward all the other denominations and their representatives, to meet them in council concerning the religious needs of the area, to resolve to respect the rights and prerogatives of one another, to abide by the decisions and agreements which they make in conference with one another, and to carry on in a spirit of mutual trustfulness and security.

With kindest regards, I am ~~Yours truly,~~

Faithfully yours,

JMS:PDS

June
15th
1938

Rev. Jackson Webster
Sitka
Alaska

Dear Mr. Webster:

I am enclosing herewith a page from THE STAR WEEKLY of Toronto, which describes the very romantic missionary enterprise that is being carried on by the Board of Home Missions of the United Church of Canada. It appealed to me very strongly as a type of work that might well be introduced into our program of Presbyterian missions in southeastern Alaska. Of course, we have the Princeton, and I realize that it is used occasionally to carry sick people to the hospital and for other types of work similar to what is described in this article; but it has always seemed to me that the Princeton is kept so busy on other errands that it does not seem possible to use it specifically for a program of human welfare and evangelism such as is visualized in the activity of the United Church Marine Missions on the British Columbia coast. If there is need in that area, it seems to me that there is still more need among the natives in southeastern Alaska.

Since I have been obliged to abandon my hope of using the Princeton primarily for this type of work, much as I would like to see it done, I have had it in mind to give Walter Soboleff an appointment to do this very kind of work when he graduates from Dubuque next spring. The girl he is going to marry is a trained nurse; and if we could appoint them as itinerant missionaries, equip them with a boat not nearly so large or pretentious as the Princeton, I believe they would be able to carry out the plan which I have longed to inaugurate in our work in southeastern Alaska but for which the way has not seemed to be clear since I found that the Princeton either was not available or not adaptable to this type of ministry.

My purpose in sending this article to you is, first of all, to sow the idea of inaugurating work of this kind in the minds of the members of Alaska Presbytery; and, second, to secure the reaction of each of you to the plan which I have in mind, to appoint Walter Soboleff as an itinerant evangelist, equipped with a boat, and with his wife as a nurse to carry on a purely evangelistic work among the natives in the little villages and canneries, whom we do not reach in the program of the Princeton and among whom it is not necessary or advisable to establish churches or to erect church buildings. What we want above all things is to take Christ into the hearts and lives of individual natives, and I shall never feel that our program of Alaska missions is thoroughly efficient until we have a missionary who is reaching the scattered, isolated, and unevangelized portion of the native population who are living in the small villages all along the southeastern Alaska coast.

I am taking you into my confidence in this matter, and I hope you will write me frankly giving me your reaction to these plans which I have in mind and which I have discussed with Walter Soboleff with his hearty approval, and which have been brought to a focus by the reading of this article concerning the Marine Missions of the United Church, of whose ministry I was not aware until this paper came into my hands.

Faithfully yours,

JMS:BH

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

JACKSON L. WEBSTER, PASTOR

SITKA, ALASKA

June 30, 1938,

Dr. J. M. Somerndike,
156 Fifth Avenue,
New York City, N.Y.

Dear Dr. Somerndike:

I was very much interested in your letter of June 15th and the article you enclosed and I find myself in hearty sympathy with your desires in the matter. I am not certain, however, whether the plan of putting another boat into service is wise. My own feeling is that the Princeton should be used differently to do a great deal more of the kind of work you are thinking of.

That has been in the mind of Presbytery and our Presbyterian Society for several years. It is that very thought which has lain back of the repeated petitions we have sent into the Board asking for a second worker on the Princeton and for her use in evangelistic work. My feeling is that the failure of the Princeton to do the kind of work you refer to is due largely to two reasons. First, Mr. Swanson has been kept down to a very limited budget which has required him to spend a great deal of his time in doing maintenance work on the boat, engine repairs, and etc. During Mr. Waggoner's day, most of this work was done by machine shops and paid for, leaving him free to devote himself more largely to spiritual tasks. The second reason, as I see it is that Swanson does not seem inclined to do that type of work. He seems to be more interested in his engines and wireless telephone than he is in people and their spiritual needs. I am sure that he would deny this and, perhaps, I am wrong in my judgment, but I have repeatedly seen him spend his time, while in port, on everything else but the pastoral and evangelistic tasks which most needed to be done. Do not think I mean to accuse him of laziness, for he is anything but lazy. Rather I would say that his greatest fault as an itinerant pastor is his lack of interest in people and ~~an~~ ability to understand them and their spiritual needs. Let me give you a rather trivial example, but I think it will make my point clear. Our daughter, Mary Ellen, was about four years old when Swanson began coming to our house on his visits to Sitka. Mary Ellen has always been inclined to make up to strangers and she used all her arts on Verne, but in vain. He paid no attention to her and did not seem to know that she existed. Finally, Mary Ellen became discouraged and now pays no attention to Mr. Swanson when he comes.

He told me recently that he was thinking of seeking a land pastorate. He did not say he had decided on it, but I am inclined to believe that Mrs. Swanson would like him to leave the boat.

From the standpoint of spiritual effectiveness I believe that I would favor a change.

As to the possibility of appointing Walter Soboleff as his successor - that should be thoughtfully considered before it was done. He would be excellent in almost every way. The only doubt I have about him is in the matter of oversight of the lay workers. His appointment might give rise to jealousy there. I am inclined to believe that it would be wiser to put the extra money into the Princeton, rather than to buy and maintain a second boat. The Princeton really needs one man to run it and maintain it and another to do the pastoral work. It would be excellent as you say if we could have a trained nurse aboard also, but babies might prove a stumbling block in that matter.

While I was in Juneau with the committee to settle the matter of the church site I talked with Mr. Faulkner regarding the sale of our Sitka white church. He showed me a letter from Mr. Tribus of Dr. Wanacott's office stating that the Board would not be willing to accept \$1500.00 for the property at the present time. Mr. Faulkner has since put up notices for public sale July 23rd and has asked me to represent the Board at that time. Since you have said that the Board would be willing to sell at that price I hope you will get in touch with Mr. Wanacott and make sure that I am notified before the date of the sale as to the Board's desires in the matter.

With kindest regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

Jackson L. Webster

J. L. Webster.

P.S. First Church Grungtown has our Sitka Church on a specific work basis. It would be fine if Mr. Gaw could speak there. He is now at Union Theo. Seminary. I believe. Possibly you could fix it up. I mentioned the possibility in writing Dr. Talbot recently. J.L.W.

July 8th, 1938

Rev. Jackson L. Webster
First Presby. Church
Sitka, Alaska

Dear Mr. Webster:

Thank you very much for your fine letter of June 30th. The reactions of all the missionaries to my letter regarding the possibilities of "marine missions" seem to coincide with the views which I have held regarding the "Princeton" ever since the Board gave me the administrative supervision of the Alaska work. Never for a moment have I been satisfied with the way in which Mr. Swanson has used the "Princeton." I have been waiting for the Committee of the Presbytery to insist upon Mr. Swanson carrying out my own ideas which reflect the ideas of the Board, but under Mr. Glasse's regime as Chairman, Mr. Swanson seemed to enjoy the privilege of doing as he pleased. I have sent him a telegram today telling him that we will not approve of any leave of absence during the summer while he engages in the fishing industry, and that the Board wishes him to keep the "Princeton" in constant use for evangelistic work, pastoral visitation, and vacation Bible schools in fishing and canning villages in southeastern Alaska. If Mr. Swanson does not care to carry out this program, I am perfectly willing to have him resign, and I think that we will then employ a navigator to operate the "Princeton," and put Walter Soboleff on it as the minister-missionary, with his wife, when he graduates next spring, in the hope that the presbytery will ordain him on the basis of the education he has received, thus enabling him to perform all the functions of an ordained minister. If he will serve in this capacity until Mr. Waggoner's retirement I would then put him in charge of the Juneau native church. How do these plans appeal to you? I earnestly seek your frank counsel.

Either Mr. Faulkner was mistaken in stating that Mr. Womacott's letter declared that the Board would not accept \$1,500 for the Sitka White Church, or it was the mistake of the

stenographer to insert the word "not" in the letter which Mr. Faulkner showed you. If you will refer to the letter written to you by Mr. Wencott under date of November 20th, 1937, you will note that he states in that letter that "our committee has approved of accepting the \$1,500, although it is a very heavy loss to us." We are now going through the process for closing the Board's mortgage so that we can give a clear title to any purchaser who wishes to buy the property.

I shall suggest to Mr. Yaw the possibility of getting in touch with the First Church of Youngstown.

Faithfully yours,

JMS:PDS

Sitka Alaska
July 23, '38

Rev. J. M. Somerville
156 Fifth Ave.
New York, N.Y.

Dear Dr. Somerville,

7N
Index
m
8/10/38
The marshal's sale is just over
and the white church building is
sold to Sam Morris, a fish dealer,
for \$2500.00. That is a little better
than we feared anyway.

Am expecting the Princeton
in anytime now and will leave
with Swanson immediately for
Todd Canyon where we will spend
a week holding V.B.S. and services.
May go for another week to Chickigoff.
Am counting my vacation beginning
as of last Monday.

With kindest regards -
Yours

J. L. Webster

Narrative Report

June - July 1938

Our Vacation Bible School was delayed till July because the Bureau School extended its year through June. Most of the church families remained in town in July because of the fact that so few canneries are operating. But some parents, especially whites, hesitated to send their children because of the prevalence of syphilis in village families. We did not urge them but, secured a good proportion of the village children. Miss Margaret Hope, S. J. S. alumna, and Nathan Gier Hills, summer volunteer worker at S. J. S. helped me with the school. We felt it went well and results were good.

I refused re-nomination as Chamberlain of Commerce secretary and will have more time during the coming year for enlarging church program.

Purification is due today and I am to accompany Swanson for next two weeks, probably visiting Todd Cannery and two Chichigoff mines. I am counting this part of my vacation.

J. L. Webster

Aug.
9th
1938

Rev. J. L. Webster,
Sitka, Alaska

Dear Mr. Webster:

I am glad to learn that the sale of
the white church at Sitka has been completed and that
the Board will be able to salvage \$2600 from that un-
fortunate investment.

Appreciating your good offices in
the matter, I am

Faithfully yours,

JMS:BN

Sitka Alaska
Aug. 17, 1938

Rev. J. M. Somerville
156 Fifth Ave.
New York, N.Y.

Dear Dr. Somerville,

Your proposal to put Walter Soboleff in Juneau as Mr. Waggoner's successor and your request for my "frank counsel" on the matter puts me in an embarrassing position. For I have been thinking seriously of a fellow named Webster as a possible candidate for that field. I would like to stay in Sitka for another year or so, possibly till our new building is built, but then give way to a new pastor. We will complete our tenth year of service in Sitka in October. Of the other fields in the presbytery, ^{Juneau} that is the one which most interests me.

Mrs. Webster and I feel that our experience in the work here would be valuable in another field where the problems are similar as they are in Juneau. We are willing to stay on in this service, if the Board and Pres. by desire it, and if there is another field open when the time seems ripe for us to leave Sitka.

As regards Walter's ability to handle the Juneau field, I am confident that he could do good work there and that he and Mrs. Soboleff

would be very acceptable to the people, especially the young people of mixed blood, of whom there are many in Juneau. On the other hand it is not a field which demands native leadership, for there are very few of the native members who do not understand English. And also there will be a steadily increasing proportion of white and partly white members who do not understand the thought and are not limited by Indian customs and ways of thinking. The native village in Juneau is rapidly disintegrating, both geographically and racially. Ten years from now there will be no separate native group. Obviously we cannot think of our church as destined to remain native. The function it will perform is to minister to the laboring class, especially the pidgin group in that section of the city. While in Juneau to help settle the location of the new church, I called on three church families. In all three cases the man was white, the woman partly native. One of the men was half Filipino. Their boy looks like a Filipino; their girl has blond curls and blue eyes.

I do not want to be in a contest with Walter for the Juneau field, but am anxious to have the right plans made for the church and also to have Walter started in the right field. And I doubt the wisdom, for the sake of Walter and his wife, of starting them in Juneau. I feel that they should first make good on a really native field, like Hoonah.

You will have my narrative report soon telling of my extension work to which I devoted part of my vacation. I was away from Sitka fifteen days including three Sundays. We held twenty five meetings - services and school sessions - and must have travelled five or six hundred miles. The response was encouraging and I felt the trip was very much worth while. At several of the meetings we had a large proportion of whites as well as natives and Orientals. Bunkhouses, warehouses, cabins and schoolhouses furnished meeting places as well as the churches at Klawock and Craig. We travelled all night several times, moving on as soon as our program was finished.

I am glad to hear from Pederson that you are seriously considering the plan of putting two men on the Princeton, one as an operator, the other as a minister. I feel as though we have been expecting too much of Swanson - sewing in both capacities and forced by a small budget to do much of his own repairing. I think his abilities lie rather in the direction of the operator than the minister. He is a very hard worker, good at the mechanics and navigation of the boat, but weak in much of his preaching and teaching because of his failure to sense the needs and condition of his class or congregation. He seems to preach more for the sake of his message than his people.

Pederson and I were discussing the question of the Juneau manse when he was here

last week. It is my hope that Mr. & Mrs. Waggoner will not be required to move till the time of their retirement. Their present situation will not be any particular drawback to the work at the new church. They can see the building from their windows and reach it in five minutes with their car. A card on the church door giving their address and telephone number would enable ~~them~~ anyone to reach them promptly. So far as I know, there is no reason for haste in selling the old manse or building the new. We can keep on the watch for the right piece of property and buy it when opportunity offers.

This letter grows too long - yet I must ask you about our building project. The sale of the old white church building removes the last stumbling block and now all we need is the money! What help can we hope for from the Board? I have no hope that we can build the building which our work requires for less than \$15,000. Prices are high. We can only do it at that figure by volunteer labor and cutting all our own rough lumber. I believe we can increase our \$3,000. fund (which we now have) to \$5,000. within a year, if the building is started. Could the

Board help us to the extent of \$10,000.?

As I told you last year, I am eager to see the new church built free from debt so that the church can move on rapidly to self-support. One encouraging fact toward that end is the increasing proportion of white people in our congregation and Sunday School. Another is the steady shift of the center of population toward our church. The town is growing rapidly and a lot of new houses are being built. The three largest are all within a quarter of a mile of the church.

Pederson told me of your inquiry regarding Gibson Young and outside education, so I am writing him about the matter and he will no doubt take it up with you. I presume he has already told you of our discovery that Walter is not going to graduate next spring as he had hoped and as he has led us to believe he would do. I know from your letter of July 8th that you are under that impression and Mr. Jew is also.

In view of this postponement it is not so urgent to decide where he is to be placed. As for Gibson, I think if we are to do anything for him, it should be done at once.

With kindest regards,

Faithfully Yours,

J. R. Webster

Narrative Report - July - Aug. 1938

J. L. Webster - Sitka, Alaska

Somewhat more than half of this period I devoted to extension work, first with the help of N. G. Hills, a young man from Oak Park, Ill. who is spending the summer at S.J.S., then in cooperation with Mr. & Mrs. Swanson on the Princeton. At Todd Cannery we conducted a U.B.S. for five days and held three services with attendance increasing from 30 to 80 the last night. Hills then returned to Sitka, while I went with the Princeton to Tyee Cannery. Here we made pastoral calls and held an evening service in the Filipino bunkhouse with an attendance of about 60. By 9 o'clock we were on our way down Chatham Strait again. I stood night watch for Mr. Swanson and think I never saw so beautiful a night. The glow of the sun was visible all night in the northern sky and the stars competed with the northern lights in glory. Next day (Saturday) we spent at Steamboat Bay Cannery, holding a Bible School with 16 children in the afternoon and a service of 100 at the Oriental bunkhouse in the evening. Sunday morning we were at Klawock, evening at Craig with S.J.S. choirs at both services. Travelling on we left Alice Eide an S.J.S. girl at Waterfall Cannery to work. Then south to Hydaburg and Rose Point Cannery to pick up three girls with tuberculosis for the Juneau hospital. By Monday evening we were back at Waterfall for a prayer mtg. Next day, Tuesday we devoted to a Bible School,

pastoral calling and an afternoon service when the fish were done for the day. This was held in the second floor of the big fish house, with empty salmon boxes for seats. I had an interesting talk with a group of Filipinos after the service, answering questions about the Bible and Church.

On Wednesday we stopped at Wrangell and Petersburg on our way to Juneau where we spent most of Thursday. Friday morning we reached Chichigoff Mine, about fifty miles west and north of Sitka. Here we held services Friday, Saturday & Sunday and five sessions of Bible School with an average attendance of about 20 children. We also organized a Sunday School which we hope will be permanent. We left the one collection we took as a nucleus for their hymn book fund. I am expecting our church to help them financially.

The attitude of the workers at the mine was unfriendly, in contrast to that of the cannery workers, who were sometimes indifferent, but on the whole welcomed us cordially. The mothers of the few families at Chichigoff are our main hope of progress there. So far as I know this was the first visit by a Presbyterian worker. Catholic priests have made annual visits. There are about 140 people.

J. L. W.

Copy to
Redman

September 7th, 1938

Rev. J. L. Webster
Sitka
Alaska

Dear Mr. Webster:

I have yours of August 17th which interests me greatly. I appreciate your kindness in writing frankly about your own hopes and plans and I assure you that I have considered the whole matter in a very impersonal way and without prejudice. First of all let me say that it seems to us to be exceedingly important that you should remain at Sitka, at least until the new church building is erected. I have vivid recollections of the reaction of your congregation to your declaration of intention to leave Sitka several years ago when a vigorous protest was filed, the congregation being under the impression that the Board had advised you to leave, which as you know was not the case. Since that time I have not detected any change in the attitude of your congregation, but on the contrary the success which has attended your efforts, together with the growth of the work under your leadership, and the enthusiasm which you have aroused among the people for the erection of a new building, all point toward the desire of the people to have you continue. It seems quite clear to us that it would be an unwise move for you to leave Sitka until the new church building is completed. The congregation would be greatly discouraged by your departure and it would set back the building project probably for several years.

In the second place we are definitely committed to the plan of placing a native in charge of the native church at Juneau. We feel that it is good strategy to do this, especially in view of the feud which has existed for many years between the leadership of the Northern Light Church and the native church which I am sure would die out if the native church were supplied by a native leadership, which would make the distinction of the two churches quite complete and clearly understood. If you were to be appointed in charge of the native church in Juneau all of the prejudices and antagonism which have characterized the relation

between the two churches for many years would not only continue, but doubtless would be accelerated.

Third, your statement that Walter Soboleff has still another year of training at Dubuque and ~~not~~ graduate until 1939 seems to us to be quite providential, because Mr. Waggoner will not arrive at the age of seventy until 1940. He probably would be willing to retire a few months before his seventieth birthday with the retirement allowance which our Board would give him in addition to his regular pension.

We have proposed that a man be placed on the "Princeton" under the title of "Presbyterian Evangelist," with someone in charge of the navigation of the boat. The boat would be used simply as his means of transportation and would be entirely at his disposal, the understanding being of course that his itinerations would be arranged in such a way as to permit the use of the "Princeton" to transport members of the Presbytery to its meetings and back to their homes, and also for carrying students back and forth to Sheldon Jackson School and to Haines.

When the church building at Sitka has been completed, it seems to Mr. Pederson and to me that you could fill this position with great acceptance and satisfaction to all concerned. Your qualities as an evangelist are well known and appreciated. You could render a great service to all the churches, and in addition you have the missionary vision and outlook which would prompt you to use the "Princeton" in a program of extension in the canning and fishing villages, both among natives and whites throughout southeastern Alaska. Notwithstanding the fact that Mr. Swanson has advised us that there is no missionary work of this kind that needs to be done, I am satisfied that there are many opportunities of this kind which we are neglecting.

You could make your headquarters at Juneau. Your salary would be at the rate of \$1,500 a year. Mr. Swanson would be retained as navigator. I would like you to consider this matter and to let me know your reaction to it.

With reference to the building of the new church at Sitka, I will confer with Dr. Keeler as soon as he returns from his vacation early in September and I will ascertain what the Department of Building Aid will be willing to recommend to the Board in the way of a grant or loan toward the new church. I am not very hopeful that the Board would grant so large a sum as \$10,000, but I will write you later regarding this matter.

I would like you to elucidate your statement, "I think if we are to do anything for Gibson Young, it should be done at once." What do you recommend that we should do for him?

With kind regards, I am

Very cordially yours,

Sept.

7th

1938

Rev. Jackson L. Webster,
Sitka, Alaska

Dear Mr. Webster:

I have yours of September 10th relative to the building of a new church. You will remember that you wrote me last November regarding this matter, inquiring what the Board would be willing to do in the way of an appropriation toward the new building. In my reply I stated - assuming that the new building would not run to a total cost of over \$10,000 including cash and the value of the labor - that I believed it would be possible to secure a grant of \$3500. You stated that the church would raise \$5000 in cash and that some labor and material would be donated in addition. I told you that if the labor and material donated could be valued at \$1700 in addition to the \$5000, you could then represent to the Board that your church was raising a total of \$6700 and this would permit you to qualify for a grant (not a loan) of one-third of the total - namely, \$3300. In other words, under this arrangement you would have \$5000 cash raised by the church and \$3300 cash from the Board plus at least \$1700 representing the value of labor and donated material.

I earnestly advise against spending more than \$10,000 for the new building. The day of large church buildings has passed. Everyone who is interested in a church building project now is building on a much more conservative basis than they would have done a few years ago. We have all learned our lesson from the tragedy of church debts which now hangs over our entire denomination because of over-zealousness and extreme optimism in the building of the church. In a community like Sitka with a population no larger than Sitka has, I am quite sure that based upon all precedents and experience our Board would not feel that it would be warranted in extending aid on a project that would cost more than \$10,000. Surely for that amount you can erect in Sitka a building that will adequately serve the needs of the community for many, many years to come.

Faithfully yours,

JMS:BH

NARRATIVE REPORT - SEPTEMBER 15th to
OCTOBER 15th

With the opening of Sheldon Jackson School our congregation suddenly increased from about 100 to more than 200 and we again had out chorus choir of more than 30 students. The new members of Sheldon Jackson staff are earnest Christian people who are fitting in excellently in our program. One of the most encouraging things that has happened to us this year is our annual "Every Member" canvass which began September 25th, and resulted in pledges ~~of~~ more than 50 per cent larger and more numerous than last year. This is due partly to the considerable increase we have had in white members of our congregation many of whom have pledged to the church for the first time this year; and second to the fact that we have adopted the Youth Budget plan. Last year the young people pledged about \$100. This year the session asked them if they would be willing to undertake to pay for all the church fuel oil which we have budgeted for \$160. The young people responded splendidly. Almost all of them have pledged and the total has already exceeded \$160. They have also pledged about \$100 toward our benevolence. This has enabled us to take a forward step of \$120 toward self support as well as securing our going over the top on our benevolence budget.

Another forward step has been the organization of a young peoples' group made up mostly of Sheldon Jackson alumni. They meet at the Manse Thursday evening immediately after the Sunday evening choir practice. The first hour is spent in fun; the second in discussion of some serious topic. Tonight we are going to work on the liquor problem.

Another addition to our program is a week day church school for 6th, 7th, and 8th graders at the U. S. Bureau School. We are planning a mission to Hoonah and Angoon for the first two weeks in November.

J. L. Webster

Sitka, Alaska,
October 20th, 1938

Dr. J. M. Somerndike,
156 Fifth Avenue,
New York City, N. Y.

Dear Doctor Somerndike:

I have been slow about answering your letters of September 7th, partly because I have been busy trying to get things going right for the new church year and partly because I do not know how to answer you.

Perhaps you are right about our remaining in Sitka and we are willing to do so as long as it seems best to the church and to the Board. We are anxious, however, not to outstay our best usefulness and it was with that in mind that I spoke of the possibility of going to Juneau. I suppose it will be the summer of 1940 before any change will be made there.

I cannot fully agree with the wisdom of putting a native pastor in charge of the Juneau church. While it is still spoken of as a "native" church, it is not completely that any longer and is bound to become less and less so. It is inevitably becoming a mixed congregation and the money that is being invested in the new plant will inevitably lead further in that direction. We will be attempting an impossible task in Juneau if we try to keep one church strictly white and the other strictly native. While a majority of the members of Mr. Waggoner's church now are native, I venture to say that ten years from now they will be only a minority of the membership and none of them will be of pure Indian blood. The others will be white and mixed blood people, fishermen and working men, together with some white Christians who prefer that kind of a church. It is true that Walter Soboleff would bring peace to the situation there, not merely because he has Indian blood, but also because he is a fellow who gets along peaceably with other people. My conviction is that the problem we have there now is one that grows out of the leadership of the churches, rather than a particularly difficult situation.

Passing on to the matter of the Princeton. I thank you for the confidence you express in my ability to meet the need there, but I do not feel equally sure of it myself. In the first place, I am sure that I never could work successfully with Swanson as operator. He is excellent in that capacity, but we disagree radically on so many things that I am sure that we would not be happy working together on the same boat. Again I do not feel certain that I would get on well in that kind of work. I would

#2. Dr. J M. Somerndike

10/20/38

enjoy it in many ways and feel that it is a great opportunity to meet a deep need, but I have always served in a settled pastorate and do not know whether I could adjust myself to the irregularity of that work. My health demands regular sleep and the short periods I have spent on the Princeton have always been rather a strain to me. However, I do not want to give the impression that I am unwilling to attempt this task if it is the judgment of the Board and the Presbytery that I am suited for it. I would miss my home life which means a great deal to me and Mrs. Webster would be taken away from her opportunities as a pastor's wife. But no doubt we would adjust ourselves to these things and perhaps find still greater values in the new arrangement. I judge you do not want me to consider it for at least another year, as there seems no prospect of our new building being done sooner than that.

An idea that I have been thinking about is the possibility of various members of Presbytery sharing in this task of Princeton Evangelist. There would have to be a new man aboard the boat, but might it not work out well to let him relieve the pastors for short periods on their fields while they went out on the boat on missions to certain parts of the Presbytery? The suggestion grows out of my experience last fall and this summer in making trips with Swanson. We spent four days at Angoon with a little party from Sitka last November and secured some worthwhile results, including fifteen new members for the church. This summer, as you know, I was on the Princeton for a couple of weeks during the cannery season. We are planning to go out again the last of this month and visit Angoon and Hoonah each for a few days. It is hard to ask a man to leave his field with no one to substitute for him. I am fortunate in having the Sheldon Jackson staff to help me. But if there was a regular missionary aboard the Princeton I think the various pastors might well share in the task in somewhat the same way that I am doing occasionally. I believe that it would be good for all of them as workers and also that it would be good for the fields to get acquainted with the various men and receive the different kinds of help that they would be able to give.

Now as to the matter of the building. You refer to Dr. Keeler's department, but when we wrote him last year he said that since our building was located on the Sheldon Jackson campus, his department could do nothing for us, but that it would have to be handled through you. I am sorry, Doctor Somerndike, that you have never been to Sitka. I wish that you could be present at one of our morning services with an attendance of close to 250 people and also see the needs of better housing and equipment for our Sunday School work. I wish too that you could see Sitka

#3. Dr. J. M. Somerndike

10/20/38

and the way it is growing and changing. I believe that you would agree that \$15,000 is none too much, but rather too little to meet our needs for a new building. Of course, I cannot speak definitely on the matter of cost since we have not yet secured plans and consequently cannot have definite estimates. But on the rough basis of cubic feet, the building which we are planning will cost considerably more than \$15,000. There is no use in erecting a building that is too small for our work. Is it not true rather that we should build for the future of our steadily growing church and program? I am inclined to believe that we ourselves can raise more than the \$5,000 which we have used as a goal, but I sincerely hope that you will not decide definitely against our request for a grant of \$10,000. I will write you again as soon as we secure our tentative plans.

We have gotten most encouraging results from our "Every Member" canvass which we started September 25th for the church year beginning with October. Last year we had a total of 132 pledges. Now we have more than 200 and more are coming in. Last year we received just about a thousand dollars from our offerings. This year I look for receipts close to \$1,500. I am confident too that we will go a long way over the top in our benevolence giving. The increase is due principally to two causes. First, the increase of white members in our church and congregation. The three largest pledges we received are all new pledges from people who have joined our congregation this year. The second reason is that we have adopted the Youth Budget plan with fine success. We put up a challenge to the young people to pay for all our fuel oil which we have budgeted at \$160. Last year the young people pledged about \$100, but this year their pledges have already exceeded the necessary amount for the oil. Also, there has been a large increase in their benevolence pledges. A committee of high school students has worked with us in fine shape on this matter. I look for a similar spiritual harvest later this fall when we will seek for new members by confession of faith.

Two new items have been added to our church program this month. A week-day church school at the United States Bureau School and a young people's club made up mostly of Sheldon Jackson Alumni. The club meets at the Manse each Thursday, immediately after the Sunday evening choir practice. We spend the first hour in fun and the second hour in discussion. We begin tonight the discussion of the liquor problem.

This reminds me that I have lost the pamphlet you sent us-- "The Local Church and the Liquor Problem." I would very much appreciate if you would send me another or would order it for me.

The week-day church school is limited so far to the children

#4 Dr. J. M. Somerdike

10/20/38

of the 6th, 7th, and 8th Grades. It is being conducted by Miss Morton of Sheldon Jackson School, with the members of her senior class to help her. We hope to enlarge it later to include children of lower grades.

I am mailing my "Application for Aid" to Mr. Pederson today. You will be glad to note the additional \$10.00 which the church has undertaken to pay on my salary.

Thank you for your constant kindness and cooperation.

Very sincerely yours,

Jackson L. Webster

October 28, 1938

Dear friends:

In an effort to kill a whole flock of birds with one stone, I am going to mimeograph a sketch of our work and our church situation.

One of the most interesting experiences I had this summer was a two weeks trip on the Princeton with Mr. and Mrs. Swanson. We visited canneries, villages and one mine where we held services and Bible schools. Only two of our meetings were held in churches. The others were in bunkhouses, cabins, warehouses, cooler sheds, and schoolhouses. Our congregations were mixed in race, education and religion, Whites, Indians, Filipinos, Chinese and Japanese; graduate students from the University of Washington and illiterate Indians; consecrated Christians, drunken sots, and courteous Buddhists. Mrs. Swanson played the portable organ and sometimes we organized a choir of Sheldon Jackson alumni, or had the Bible school children sing our "anthem" for us. I tried to apply the parables of Jesus to the needs we saw among these fisherfolk and found many of them responsive. Jesus fits in to the canneries of Alaska as well as He did to the villages of Galilee.

We find many things to encourage us at the beginning of our new school and church year here in Sitka. The enrollment of S. J. S. is a little larger than last year and there seems to be a more earnest spirit among the students and a better response to our religious appeal. We have launched the Youth Budget Plan and the children and young people have assumed the responsibility for heating the church. It means a fifty per cent increase in their giving but they are going to meet it. The adult pledges have increased sixty per cent as compared with last year. This is due largely to the steady increase of white people who are accepting our plan of a mixed congregation and coming to worship with the native people. We are sure that it is a more Christian way than the two separate congregations we used to have in Sitka.

Our church building is becoming more and more inadequate for our needs, especially for the Sunday School and church social life. Many of the Sunday School classes are scattered about the campus and meeting in homes and dormitories. But eight classes still have to meet in the church auditorium and inevitably interfere with each other. We would like to hold church dinners, but cannot for lack of a large dining room and kitchen. We have raised \$3500 for our new church building and are asking the Board for a grant of \$10,000, but have no assurance yet that they will be able to give it.

We have quite a varied group in our parish and in our church; first, there is the staff of S. J. S. our good friends and loyal helpers; there is the live student body of S. J. S. just awaking to the full realization of their Christian responsibility; there are the native people of the town, some old saints and early converts, some fine Alumni of S. J. S. and of course, the indifferent, the drunkards, and always the children; then there are the white people of the town, those who are glad to cooperate and those who will not worship in the same church with an Indian; and, last, there are two special groups, the 200 men in our Pioneer's Home and the 80 men at our Havy air base. We try to reach them all through some phase of our church work and by personal visits.

With the week-day Church School and two new Young People's societies which we have started, we trust that this will be a year of real progress in the development of our church.

Last November we made a four day visit to the church at Angoon, holding nightly evangelistic meetings, classes, special women's and young people's meetings, etc. Mrs. Webster devoted herself to women's work and music; one of my elders did personal work among the older people; and two S. J. S. students led in the young people's work.

This year our churches at Kake and Hoonah have asked us to visit them in the same way and we are setting out to do it this week, taking nine people beside Mr. and Mrs. Swanson of the "Princeton". Our missionary work was established in these villages after 1900 and the Federal Public Schools still later; so they are far behind such towns as Sitka, Wrangell, and Metlakatla in the development of Christian civilization. They need our help and we will be blessed in giving it.

As to our family, we are all well and busy enjoying life. Mrs. Webster just said, "Every morning I spend my time putting things away and next morning there are just as many things to do over again." The Women's Missionary Society, of which she is president, is preparing for a rummage sale next week to raise money for our building fund. So every day bundles of old clothes, shoes, etc., come to the manse for the committee to sort out and price.

Dan is a senior at Whitworth College, majoring in Zoology. He writes us about dissecting cats, managing the college annual and hitchhiking to football games. Richard is a high school sophomore, busy at present memorizing Shakespeare's "Seven Ages of Man" and picturing himself more or less accurately as

"the lover,
Sighing like furnace,"

David is a Freshman, somewhat more interested just now in drawing for a poster contest than working algebra problems. Mary Ellen is a second grader, boasting yesterday that when her teacher left the room, she was given the responsibility of hearing the first graders in their reading lesson.

Sunday, October 30, will be the tenth anniversary of our coming to Sitka. We can see some good results of our work, but long and hope for much more.

We thank you for your remembrance of us and the share you take in supporting our work through the board and above all in your prayers.

With kindest regards, I am

Sincerely your friend,

Nov.
10th
1938

Rev. Jackson L. Webster,
Sitka, Alaska

Dear Mr. Webster:

Just this word of congratulation to you and your congregation upon the splendid results of the Every-Member canvass. Please convey to your people this expression of our hearty appreciation of their generous pledges. It is gratifying to note that in addition to their increased pledge toward benevolences they have agreed to absorb an additional \$10 a month on your salary. We shall adjust your monthly checks accordingly.

With best wishes, I am

Faithfully yours,

JMS:BH

Nov.
14th
1938

Rev. Jackson L. Webster,
Sitka, Alaska

Dear Mr. Webster:

I have your letter of October 20th.

With reference to the native church at Juneau, I will frankly say that it would have been impossible for me to secure the gift of Mr. Scheide for the erection of the new building if we had represented to him that the native church - as you have stated in your letter - would be practically a white church within ten years. We do not want it to be a white church because it would then be in competition with the Northern Light Church; and that is something which we must under all circumstances avoid. I have pledged my word to Mr. Glasse not only in behalf of myself but in behalf of the Board, that it is our intention to make the new church a church for the native and mixed blood people, and that it is farthest from our intention to build up a church for white people. You know the race prejudice that exists in Juneau, and you know very well that if we make a bid for the white people in our native church, we will be in competition with the Northern Light Church. It is for that reason that the Board will insist upon a native being placed in charge of the Juneau church; for by maintaining a native leader there we will be avoiding the possibility of its becoming a white church.

Walter Soboleff is our choice for this field. I understand that he has another year in Dubuque, so he will not be ready until 1940 and by that time I think Mr. Waggoner will be ready to resign. I am quite sure that our Board would not approve placing another white man in charge of the native church.

I can clearly understand your attitude toward our suggestion that you consider the possibility of becoming the general missionary in the Presbytery. As I give further consideration to the matter, I think you are right in deciding against it. The proposal you have made that every white missionary in the Presbytery be regarded as an itinerant (this would be the practical effect of your suggestion) seems to me to be quite unwise. The strength of our work in every one of our Alaska fields will be found in the concentration of each of our missionaries upon his own particular field. We cannot make the business of all the fields the responsibility of all the missionaries.

I share your regret that I have not visited Sitka, and I fully expect when I come to Alaska in 1939 - which I hope to do - to visit your field at that time.

I think we had better finish the native church in Juneau before we take up the details of the church building at Sitka, and this will give your congregation a little longer time to prepare for the new building. I congratulate you upon the progress your congregation has made in its financial pledges this year, both for local support and benevolences.

With kind regards, I am

Faithfully yours,

JMS:BH

P. S.

I am enclosing herewith another copy of the leaflet, THE LOCAL CHURCH AND THE LIQUOR PROBLEM, to replace the one which you lost.

J.M.S.

Dec.
23rd
1938

Rev. J. L. Webster,
Sitka, Alaska

Dear Mr. Webster:

Miss Voss upon her return to New York from Alaska suggested the possibility of effecting a combination with the Episcopalian work in Sitka by purchasing their building, St. Peters-by-the-Sea. She was under the impression that Mrs. Molineaux was planning to return to the States and was definitely resigning from that work. I approached the Episcopal Board of Missions regarding the matter, but they were unwilling to express themselves either for or against it until they consulted Bishop Rowe. He has very definitely and positively expressed an unfavorable attitude toward the proposal.

I think it is quite clear that if we are going to have a well-equipped native church in Sitka for our native congregation, it will be necessary for us to erect such a building. Bishop Rowe apparently resents any effort on the part of Presbyterians to minister to white people at Sitka. He regards the action of our Board in building the white church as a breach of comity, and very naturally feels that the failure of that church was simply the vengeance that fate takes upon people who do the illogical thing. That is not my opinion at all, but he evidently feels very strongly that way, judging from the terms in which he wrote to the Board of Missions here in New York regarding the matter.

I think it is only fair to say to you that Miss Voss shares my misgiving about building a new church on the campus of the school. In view of the attitude of Bishop Rowe, which I do not share of course, my misgivings regarding the building of the new Presbyterian church on the school campus are considerably strengthened.

I am expecting to be in Alaska in the early summer and will go over all these things with you and the members of your session in person at that time. If I do not go anywhere else, I shall certainly come to Sitka for I want us to come to some clear conclusions and understanding regarding this whole project.

Faithfully yours,

